APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: NOV 2004

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CIACO ____ MEAB 81-137 ____

10/ / DISSEM PER CPA#2 SECRET FROM : . . . . . STAFF

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TOTS 172244Z JUL 81 DIRECTOR 986083

[redacted]

MIDDLE EAST AFRICA BRIEF CO MEAB 81-137 (17 JULY 1981).

FROM: NFAC/ OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS.

[redacted]

2. SAUDI ARABIA - IRAQ: OFFER TO HELP REBUILD REACTOR.

[redacted]

SECRET

5226046

2. SAUDI ARABIA - IRAQI OFFER TO HELP REBUILD REACTOR.

//THE SAUDI ANNOUNCEMENT ON 16 JULY THAT RIYADH WOULD BE WILLING TO UNDERWRITE THE COST OF REBUILDING THE IRAQI REACTOR DESTROYED BY ISRAEL MAY BE LITTLE MORE THAN A GESTURE TO SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH IRAQ. BAGHDAD RECENTLY CRITICIZED SAUDI ARABIA FOR NOT BEING MORE SUPPORTIVE. THE SAUDIS HAVE BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF IRAQI NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND THEY MAY HAVE SOUGHT PRIVATE ASSURANCES FROM THE FRENCH ON SAFEGUARDS.//

//THERE IS NO INDICATION OF BAGHDAD'S REACTION TO THE SAUDI OFFER. THE IRAQIS CAN EASILY AFFORD TO REBUILD THE REACTOR THEMSELVES AS THE COST IS RELATIVELY LOW. THEY WOULD NOT ACCEPT SAUDI FINANCING IF IT GAVE RIYADH A CHANCE TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON THE USE OF THE REACTOR. IN ANY EVENT, THE ISRAELIS WILL GET PROPAGANDA MILEAGE OUT OF THE OFFER, USING IT TO PORTRAY THE SAUDIS AS COLLABORATORS IN

~~SECRET~~

STAFF

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PRODUCING AN "ARAB BOMB." //

END OF MESSAGE

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